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LETTER DATED 16 DECEMBER 1996 FROM THE PERMANENT REPRESENTATIVE OF IRAQ TO THE UNITED NATIONS ADDRESSED TO THE PRESIDENT OF THE SECURITY COUNCIL

In my capacity as Chairman of the Group of Arab States for the month of December 1996, I have the honour to refer to the information contained in the letter which the Permanent Observer of Palestine to the United Nations addressed to you (S/1996/1044) concerning the Israeli plan to build 132 housing units for Jewish settlers in the neighbourhood of Ras al-Amud, within the original municipal borders of occupied East Jerusalem.

The Group of Arab States strongly condemns the expansionist Israeli policy of putting settlements in the occupied Palestinian territories, including Jerusalem, and in the other occupied Arab territories, and considers this policy to be a flagrant violation of the Fourth Geneva Convention of 1949 and of relevant Security Council resolutions; it also runs counter to the agreements signed between the Palestinian and Israeli parties.

The Israeli Government persists in taking measures and making arrangements aimed at changing the legal status and demographic composition of the city of Jerusalem; in a number of its resolutions the Security Council has declared these measures to be null and void and without legal validity.

The implementation of this plan and the continuation by the Israeli Government of its settlement policy threaten to have serious consequences for peace and security in the region.

On behalf of the Group of Arab States, I am formally requesting that the Security Council assume its responsibility for the maintenance of international peace and security, and that it convene an urgent meeting in order to take the measures that are needed in order to put an end to the Israeli Government's plan with respect to building settlements.

I should be grateful if you would arrange to have this letter circulated as a document of the Security Council.

(Signed) Nizar HAMDOON
Ambassador
Permanent Representative
Chairman of the Group of Arab States

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